

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 AF-10 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10
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R 112013Z MAY 78
FM USINT HAVANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1850
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 1230

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, PARM, UR, CU, ET, SO
SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENTS ON TLATELOLCO AND ETHIOPIA

REF: (A) HAVANA 1097 (NOTAL, (B) USUN 1807 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET COUNSELOR HINTS THAT DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN
SOVIET AND CUBAN POSITIONS ON TREATY OF TLATELOLCO AND ETHIOPIA. END
SUMMARY.

2. SOVIET EMBASSY COUNSELOR (SELETSKY) HINTED TO USINT OFFICER, APRIL
10, OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CUBANS AND SOVIETS ON SOVIET ADHERENCE TO
PROTOCOL II OF TREATY OF TLATELOLCO. (COMMENT: IT IS, OF COURSE,
IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO JUDGE SINCERITY OF SELETSKY'S REMARKS. INDEED,
SOVIET CHARGE MANASOV HAS TAKEN OPPOSITE POSITION WITH USINT CHIEF,
ALONG LINES OF TIMERBAYEV'S STATEMENTS TO LEONARD - REFTEL B, THAT
CUBANS ARE "DELIGHTED" WITH SOVIET ADHERENCE.) SELETSKY, INCORRECTLY
(SEE REFTEL A), POINTED OUT THAT CUBANS HAD NOT PUBLISHED NEWS OF
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SOVIET ADHERENCE TO PROTOCOL II AND INDICATED (CORRECTLY) THAT MATTER
HAD NOT BEEN MENTIONED IN SOVIET-CUBAN COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL A), DESPITE
FACT THAT GROMYKO HAD DISCUSSED SOVIET DECISION WITH MALMIERCA IN
MOSCOW. SELETSKY, IN REPLY TO QUESTION, DIFFIDENTLY STATED THAT HE
THOUGHT MATTER HAD ALSO BEEN DISCUSSED BY SOVIETS WITH CUBANS SOME
THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE MALMIERCA-GROMYKO TALKS. (COMMENT: THIS TIME
FROM COINCIDES WITH REPUTED AFRICAN POLICY MEETING IN MOSCOW, WHICH

MALMIERCA ALLEGEDLY DID NOT ATTEND BECAUSE OF HIS AMOEBIC DYSENTERY PROBLEM IN PARIS. RAUL CASTRO, HOWEVER, WAS NOT MENTIONED BY CUBAN PRESS AS BEING IN HAVANA DURING THIS PERIOD. MEXICAN AMBASSADOR, HOWEVER, BELIEVES THAT CUBANS WERE NOT TOLD OF SOVIET DECISION UNTIL MALMIERCA'S VISIT, AND ARE UNHAPPY.)

3. SELETSKY SAID THAT CUBANS APPEAR TO CONTINUE TO HOLD NEGATIVE POSITION REGARDING ADHERENCE TO TLATELOLCO, BUT UPCOMING NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING AND SSOD WOULD CONFRONT THEM WITH CHALLENGES FROM OTHER NATIONS TO WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND IN DETAIL. (FYI: SELETSKY TIED SOVIET DECISION TO ADHERE TO TLATELOLCO TO

LOPEZ PORTILLO'S TRIP TO MOSCOW. END FYI.) SELETSKY SAID THAT CUBAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS (MINREX) NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR LUIS GARCIA PERAZA TOLD HIM SOME THREE MONTHS AGO THAT CUBANS BELIEVED THAT US ADHERENCE TO TLATELOLCO PROTOCOL I WAS INSINCERE AND THAT US WOULD INSERT NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN QUANTANAMO, PUERTO RICO, VIRGIN ISLANDS AND OTHER US POSSESSIONS IN ZONE. (COMMENT: USINT CHIEF WILL ADDRESS TLATELOLCO, IN COURSE OF TOUR DE'HORIZON WITH FIRST VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ANILLO, MAY 12,

AND WILL REAFFIRM US COMMITMENT TO PROTOCOL I. WITH REGARD TO CUBAN REACTION TO SOVIET ADHERENCE TO PROTOCOL II, OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES TELL US THAT, AT LEAST AT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS VICE-MINISTER LEVEL, THE CUBANS APPEAR AT BEST RESERVED, IF NOT SOMEWHAT PERPLEXED.)
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4. WITH REGARD TO ETHIOPIA, SELETSKY SAID THAT CASTRO'S APRIL 26 CALL FOR SOLUTION TO ERITREAN PROBLEM BASED ON "LENINIST PRINCIPLES" (SEE HAVANA 1100) MEANT THAT POLITICAL SOLUTION SHOULD BE FASHIONED BASED ON "SELF-DETERMINATION" OF ERITREAN PEOPLE WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGNTY. HE SAID THAT CASTRO'S APRIL 26 STATEMENT ON DEFENDING ETHIOPIA AGAINST ANY "EXTERNAL AGGRESSION" CLEARLY APPLIES TO ANY SOMALI INVASION, BUT DOES NOT PER SE WRITE OFF POSSIBLE CUBAN MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN ERITREA. SELETSKY ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THAT CUBAN POSITION CONTINUES TO BE AS STATED BY CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ TO BRITISH JOURNALIST HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY IN MARCH THAT ERITREAN PROBLEM SHOULD BEST BE RESOLVED BY NON-MILITARY MEANS. SELETSKY ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT MENGISTU'S APRIL 26 REFERENCE TO ERITREANS AS "TRAITORS" AND TO NEED TO "ELIMINATE" SECESSIONIST GROUPS APPEARED TO BE AT ODDS WITH PROFESSED CUBAN PREFERENCE FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION.

5. SELETSKY CONTINUED THAT QUEST FOR ERITREAN POLITICAL SOLUTION WAS COMPLICATED BY SUPPORT OF ERITREAN SECESSION BY VARIOUS ARAB STATES OF DIVERSE POLITICAL COMPLEXION. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE POINTED TO ABSENCE OF ANY MENTION OF HORN IN RECENT IRAQI-CUBAN COMMUNIQUE (SEE HAVANA 1196.)

6. SELETSKY SAID THAT CASTRO'S APRIL 26 STATEMENT THAT CUBA'S MILITARY PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA DEPENDED ONLY ON BILATERAL DECISION OF ADDIS AND HAVANA SEEMED "CLEAR" STATEMENT THAT CASTRO DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO SUCCUMB TO US PRESSURES TO REDUCE TROOPS. (COMMENT: SELETSKY, AGAIN POSSIBLY INCINCERELY, SOUGHT TO CONVEY IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS REGRETTED CASTRO'S POSTURE ON CONTINUATION OF HIS ETHIOPIAN TROOP PRESENCE.) SELETSKY, HOWEVER, VOLUNTEERED THAT A PUBLIC RENUNCIATION BY SIAD OF TERRITORIAL CLAIMS ON ETHIOPIA, DJIBOUTI, AND KENYA WOULD REDUCE THE JUSTIFICATION FOR CONTINUED CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA.

7. COMMENT: SELETSKY SOUGHT TO CONVEY IMPRESSION OF DISJUNCTION BETWEEN SOVIET POLICY AND MENGISTU'S STATEMENTS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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ERITREA, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT, BETWEEN SOVIET POLICY AND CASTRO'S CONTINUED MILITARY PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA. WHILE A NATURAL LINE TO TAKE WITH US OFFICIALS, THE UNCERTAN RECEPTIVITY OF CUBANS TO MOSCOW'S ADHERENCE TO TLAELOLCO MAKES POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES ON TACTICS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND HAVANA AN IMPORTANT ISSUE NOW ON WHICH TO KEEP WATCH. LANE

NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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